

(iii) mixing the fat-based heat-meltable confectionery mixture and water as they pass through the mixer to form a fat-based heat-meltable confectionery composition, and

(iv) forming the fat-based heat-meltable confectionery composition into the fat-based heat-meltable confectionery product.

2. (Amended) The process as claimed in claim 1, wherein said low-shear extruder mixer is a cavity-transfer type mixer.

3. (Amended) The process as claimed in claim 1, wherein the water is introduced into the mixer in the form of an emulsion with oil.

4. (Amended) The process as claimed in claim 3, wherein the emulsion is a water-in-oil emulsion.

5. (Amended) The process as claimed in claim 3, wherein an emulsifier is included.

6. (Amended) The process as claimed in claim 1, wherein sufficient water is added such that the fat-based heat-meltable confectionery product formed in step (iv) has a water content in the range of 1.8 to 3.0% by weight.

7. (Amended) The process as claimed in claim 6, wherein the fat-based heat-meltable confectionery product formed in step (iv) has a water content in the range of 1.8 to 2.5% to by weight.

8. (Amended) The process as claimed in claim 1, wherein steps (i) and (ii) are effected simultaneously.

9. (Amended) The process as claimed in claim 1, wherein the fat-based heat-meltable confectionery mixture is a chocolate mixture.
10. (Amended) The process as claimed in claim 9, wherein the chocolate mixture is tempered.
11. (Amended) The process as claimed in claim 9, wherein the fat-based heat-meltable confectionery mixture is added to the mixer at 27 to 45°C.
12. (Amended) The process as claimed in claim 11, wherein the mixer is maintained at a temperature of 27 to 45°C.
13. (Amended) The process as claimed in claim 10, wherein the tempered chocolate mixture is added to the mixer at less than 30°C
14. (Amended) The process as claimed in claim 13, wherein the mixer is maintained at less than 30°C.
15. (Amended) The process as claimed in claim 1, wherein in step (ii), the water is added to the mixer at 30 to 45°C.
16. (Amended) The process as claimed in claim 15, wherein in step (ii), the water is added to the mixer at 40°C.
17. (Amended) A fat-based heat-meltable confectionery product prepared in accordance with the process of claim 1.
18. (Amended) A process for the manufacture of a fat-based heat-meltable confectionery product comprising the steps of:

- (i) mixing a fat-based heat-meltable confectionery mixture whose fat component remains substantially liquid from its melting temperature to a temperature not exceeding 30°C and water in a mixer to produce a fat-based heat-meltable confectionery composition, and
- (ii) forming the fat-based heat-meltable confectionery composition into the fat-based heat-meltable confectionery product.

19. (Amended) The process as claimed in claim 18, wherein said fat component referred to in step (i) is liquid at less than 20°C.

20. (Amended) The process as claimed in claim 18, wherein the mixer in step (i) is a low-shear extruder mixer.

21. (Amended) The process as claimed in claim 20, wherein said mixer is a cavity transfer mixer.

22. (Amended) The process as claimed in claim 18, wherein said fat component comprises one or more vegetable oils.

23. (Amended) The process as claimed in claim 22, wherein said one or more vegetable oils are selected from the group consisting of sunflower, maize, groundnut, palm, palm kernel and coconut oils.

24. (Amended) The process as claimed in claim 22, wherein said fat component oil(s) account(s) for at least 5% by weight of the fat-based heat-meltable confectionery mixture.

25. (Amended) The process as claimed in claim 24, wherein said fat component account(s) for between 5% and 55% by weight.